

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 298101

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ASEAN, OVIP (MOERSCH, KARL)

SUBJECT: MOERSCH'S VISIT TO SOUTHEAST ASIA AND ASEAN

- - - ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY

REF: A) STATE 25390; B) SINGAPORE 5045; C) MANILA

- - - 16690; D) BONN 19750

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1. FULFILLING PROMISE (REF A) TO INFORM DEPARTMENT OF RESULTS OF FRG MINISTER OF STATE MOERSCH'S VISIT TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, FRG EMBOFF SCHNITTGER CALLED RECENTLY ON DEPARTMENT OFFICERS. SCHNITTGER, READING FROM BONN CABLES, GAVE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF MOERSCH'S TRIP TO FOUR ASEAN COUNTRIES AND HIS TALKS WITH VARIOUS LEADERS OF THESE COUNTRIES (HE SAID THAT INDONESIA WAS NOT VISITED.).

2. SCHNITTGER'S ACCOUNT PARALLELED THAT REPORTED IN REF B RE ASEAN DESIRE TO INCREASE DIALOGUE WITH EC, PARTICULARLY IN ECONOMIC FIELD BUT ALSO ON POLITICAL SUBJECTS. SCHNITTGER'S ACCOUNT DID NOT GIVE MUCH STRESS TO ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY AND NO MENTION WAS MADE AT ALL OF MOERSCH'S INVOLVEMENT IN THIS ISSUE IN MANILA AS REPORTED REF C. WE FOUND LITTLE IN

SCHNITTGER'S ACCOUNT THAT WAS NEW OR WHICH RAN COUNTER TO OUR OWN ASSESSMENT OF ASEAN ATTITUDES. IN ENSUING DISCUSSION WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS ABOUT HOW RELATIONS WITH EC AND ASEAN COULD BE DEVELOPED, SCHNITTGER TENDED TO DOWNGRADE SHORT AND MEDIUM RUN PROSPECT OF CONCRETE EC DEALINGS WITH ASEAN. HE OPINED SUCH TIES AS MAY BE FORTHCOMING WOULD BE ESTABLISHED ON BILATERAL BASIS BY BOTH EC AND ASEAN MEMBERS OR ALTERNATIVELY MULTILATERALLY BY EC SIDE AND BILATERALLY BY ASEAN MEMBERS. IN SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO HOW FRG MIGHT MOVE

TO STRENGTHEN TIES WITH ASEAN AS RESULT OF MOERSCH'S TRIP, SCHNITTGER SAID ONLY EXCHANGE OF TRADE UNION VISITS WAS BEING ACTIVELY CONSIDERED, THIS BEING THE KIND OF FIELD WHERE FRG TECHNICAL ADVICE MIGHT BE USEFUL. AS FAR AS ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY PROPOSAL IS CONCERNED, SCHNITTGER GAVE US IMPRESSION THAT FRG SEES THIS AS CONCEPT TO BE PURSUED AS LONG RANGE GOAL WITH GOOD PART OF ASEAN RHETORIC ON THIS SUBJECT INTENDED FOR EFFECT ON THIRD WORLD AND COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. IN THIS REGARD HE NOTED THAT MOERSCH WAS GIVEN CLEARLY TO UNDERSTAND BY MARCOS THAT PHILS REGARD SECURITY TIES TO US AS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO MANILA. WE WOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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ALSO NOTE THAT IN RECENT CONVERSATION WITH FRENCH EMBOFF ON ASEAN, FRENCH VOICED SIMILAR SKEPTICISM ABOUT ABILITY TO ARRANGE CLOSER CONCRETE TIES BETWEEN EC AND ASEAN IN SHORT TIME FRAME ALTHOUGH GENERAL AND LARGELY COSMETIC DISCUSSIONS ON ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL MATTERS MAY OCCUR BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE NOTED REPORTS OF MUTUAL

SATISFACTION WITH THE EC-ASEAN ECONOMIC CONSULTATIONS AND WE ARE PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH THE WIDE RANGE OF CONCRETE ECONOMIC PROJECTS, RANGING FROM TARIFF RECLASSIFICATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER TO STUDY OF BULK SHIPMENT HANDLING, WHICH ARE BEING DISCUSSED IN THE EC-ASEAN JOINT STUDY GROUP AS REPORTED IN EC A-467 (NOTAL). IT IS OBVIOUSLY TOO EARLY TO JUDGE WHAT CONCRETE RESULTS WILL COME FROM THESE STUDIES BUT THEY MAY SUGGEST A BETTER POTENTIAL OF COOPERATIVE DEALING BETWEEN EC AND ASEAN ON ECONOMIC SUBJECTS THAN THE ABOVE CITED COMMENTS WOULD ALLOW.

4. COMMENT: OUR READING OF THE ASEAN MEMBERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY IN SEA IS THAT MOST CONTINUE TO SEE IT AS AN ULTIMATE GOAL -- ONE TO BE ACHIEVED WHEN CONDITIONS WARRANT. WHILE THERE ARE DIFFERENCES AMONG THE MEMBERS ON HOW THEY PERCEIVE

THIS CONCEPT -- MALAYSIA, FOR EXAMPLE IS A STRONG PRO-PONENT OF THE IDEA -- WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE ASEAN MEMBERS -- EVEN INCLUDING MALAYSIA -- WISH TO SEE THE US WITHDRAW ITS SECURITY PRESENCE FROM THE AREA UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES ALTHOUGH THEY DO WISH US PRESENCE TO BE RATHER INCONSPICUOUS AND LOW KEY.

EVEN AS A FUTURE GOAL, HOWEVER, THE ZONE OF PEACE CONCEPT HAS ITS PRESENT IMPORTANT USES. IT SERVES, FOR EXAMPLE, TO ESTABLISH ASEAN'S NONALIGNED CREDENTIALS AND ITS DESIRE TO STEER AN INDEPENDENT COURSE, FREE FROM BIG POWER DOMINATION, THEREBY REDUCING THE THREAT OF DIPLOMATIC ISOLATION IN THIRD WORLD CONTEXTS.

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WHILE WE EXPECT THAT AT THE FORTHCOMING ASEAN SUMMIT MEETING THE MEMBERS WILL REITERATE THEIR ADHERENCE TO THE CONCEPT OF THE ZONE, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE THAT ASEAN IS YET READY TO IMPLEMENT IT, EXCEPT IN CERTAIN RESTRICTED AND LARGELY SYMBOLIC AREAS AS, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE CASE OF THE PROPOSED TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION.

ASEAN'S POSITION WITH RESPECT TO THE CONCEPT OF A ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY SHOULD, WE THINK BE PERCEIVED AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF A GROUP WHICH IS ONLY JUST BEGINNING TO FIND ITS ORGANIZATIONAL FOOTING. WHILE THE COLLAPSE OF INDOCHINA HAS RESULTED IN A CONSIDERABLE IMPETUS TO ASEAN COOPERATION AND COHESIVENESS, AND TO ITS POLITICAL IMPORTANCE BOTH

WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE REGION, THERE ARE STILL MANY PROBLEMS WHICH ASEAN MUST SOLVE IF IT IS TO REACH ITS FULL POTENTIAL. FOR EXAMPLE, IT AS YET HAS NO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE VIEWS OF ITS MEMBERS ARE STILL QUITE FRAGMENTED ON A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS -- RANGING FROM SECURITY QUESTIONS ON THE ONE HAND TO THE LEVEL OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION ON THE OTHER.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES TO US LIES PRIMARILY IN THEIR ESSENTIAL MODERATE, NON-COMMUNIST ORIENTATION. WHILE THEIR FUTURE VIABILITY DEPENDS PRIMARILY ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS AND THE "NATIONAL RESILIENCE" OF EACH, THEIR COOPERATION IN THE ASEAN FRAMEWORK PROVIDES AN ADDED DIMENSION TO THE POLITICAL INTEGRITY AND, ULTIMATELY THE SECURITY OF THE REGION. THE US, WHILE NOT WISHING TO DETRACT FROM ASEAN'S INDIGENEOUS CREDENTIALS BY OVER-IDENTIFICATION WITH THE ORGANIZATION, SHOULD SUPPORT IT QUIETLY BUT ONLY IN WAYS THAT WILL ENHANCE ITS CREDIBILITY.

POSTS AND US MISSION EC BRUSSELS MAY DRAW ON ABOVE IF SUBJECT OF US VIEWS ON ASEAN SHOULD ARISE. KISSINGER

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